PROPOSED ADOPTION OF A "DECLARATION" CLARIFYING THE PROCEDURE TO BE ADOPTED UNDER ARTICLE 14 WHEN A SPECIFIC NAME IS PUBLISHED IN AN ABBREVIATED FORM

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The purpose of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to render a *Declaration* clarifying the procedure to be followed under Article 14 of the *Règles* in cases where a specific name is published in an abbreviated form. This question was first brought to notice by Dr. Ernst Mayr (then of the *American Museum of Natural History, New York*) in a letter dated 10th March 1952 and it was agreed upon between us that I should bring this matter before the Commission at a convenient time. Several examples are now available where the present problem arises and the opportunity is accordingly taken to place this matter before the Commission.

2. The nature of the problem may be illustrated by the following cases :—

(a) Among the names by Linnaeus published in 1776 in the *Catalogue* prepared in connection with Edwards's *Natural History* was the specific name "*americ.*" which appeared in the combination *Vermivora americ.* (Linnaeus, 1776, *Cat. Birds Beasts Fishes Ins. Edwards's Nat. Hist.* : 13).

(b) A specific name was published in the abbreviated form "*merid.*" for a species of *Micronisus* by Hartlaub in 1860 (*Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* **1860 :** 109).

(c) In 1771 Linnaeus published a specific name in the abbreviated form "*leucoryn.*" in the combination *Lanius leucoryn.* (Linnaeus, 1771, *Mantissa Plant* : 524).

3. At the time when this matter was before Dr. Mayr and myself in 1952 only the first two of the foregoing examples was available. These resembled

one another in that in each case it was perfectly clear what the specific name in question would have been if it had not been published in an abbreviated form, for clearly "*americ.*" was an abbreviation for "*americana*" and "*merid.*" an abbreviation for *meridionalis*. The question which we then considered together was the nature of the action which the International Commission should be advised to prescribe for the purpose of giving valid force to the spelling-out in full of the names in question. Such a Ruling appeared to be necessary in view of the fact that some zoologists had taken the view that under the Law of Priority it was necessary in such cases to retain for all time the abbreviated form in which the names concerned had originally been published. This seemed to us to be altogether too ritualistic a view and to constitute a violation of the spirit of the *Règles*.

4. At the same time we considered the situation which would arise if it were not clear how a specific name originally published in an abbreviated form ought to be spelled out. On this we took the view that recourse to the Commission would be needed in each such case as it arose. We had not, however, before us at that time an actual example of a situation of this sort. Quite recently, however, Dr. Kenneth C. Parkes (*Associate Curator of Birds, Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.*) has brought to the attention of the Office of the Commission the name published by Linnaeus in the abbreviated form *Lanius leucoryn*. This was a very good example, for, as Dr. Parkes has reported, this name has been spelled out by different authors in at least four different ways, namely: (i) *leucorynchos*; (ii) *leucorynchus*; (iii) *leucorhynchos*; (iv) *leucorhynchus*. Quite clearly this is a case where the spelling to be adopted when the abbreviation "*leucoryn.*" is spelled out can be settled only by an express Ruling by the International Commission.

5. The proposal now submitted is that the International Commission should render a *Declaration* in the following terms :—

Draft of suggested " Declaration "

(a) Where a specific name is published in an abbreviated form and it is evident what would be the correct spelling for that name if it were spelled out in full, it is to be so spelled out.

Example: In the case of a specific name published in the abbreviated form "*americ.*", it is evident that, when spelled out, that name would be *americanus* (-*a*). Accordingly, such a name is to be so spelled out.

(b) Where a specific name is published in an abbreviated form and it is not evident what would be the correct spelling for that name if it were spelled out in full, the question is to be referred to the International Commission for decision.

> *Example* : In the case of a specific name published in the abbreviated form " *leucoryn.*" it is not evident whether the intention of the author was to use the spelling " *leucorynchus* " or the spelling " *leucorynchos* ", quite apart from the fact that both the foregoing spellings are technically defective in that the letter " h " which should appear between the letters " r " and " y " was omitted in the abbreviated form employed. In such a case the question of the spelling to be used when this name is spelled out should be referred to the Commission for decision.

(c) *Recommandation* : Authors and editors are recommended to avoid the publication of specific names in abbreviated form.

6. As regards the individual names cited above in the present application no problem arises in connection with the first (*americ.* Linnaeus, 1771, as published in the combination *Vermivora americ.*), for the work in which this name appeared has been suppressed by the Commission under the Plenary Powers in *Opinion* 412 (1956, *Ops. Decls. int. Comm. zool. Nomencl.* **13** : 203—232), when also the specific name in question was placed on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology.* As regards the two other names concerned, a note has been made in the appropriate Commission File that the matter is to be reviewed as soon as a decision has been taken on the present application.